



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/647,524	08/25/2003	Mike Saucier	82138	2268
37237	7590	01/05/2006	EXAMINER	
JUAN J. LIZARRAGA 909 POYDRES STREET, SUITE 2300 NEW ORLEANS, LA 70112-1010			SLACK, NAOKO N	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3635	
DATE MAILED: 01/05/2006				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/647,524	SAUCIER ET AL.	
	Examiner Naoko Slack	Art Unit 3635	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 August 2003.  
 2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.  
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.  
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 18-25 is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
 6) Claim(s) 1,2,7,8,12,13 and 17 is/are rejected.  
 7) Claim(s) 3-6,9-11 and 14-16 is/are objected to.  
 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
 a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 8/25/03.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)  
 6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Election/Restrictions***

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-17, drawn to a concealed storage system, classified in class 414, subclass 228.
- II. Claims 18-25, drawn to a method of creating a concealed storage system, classified in class 52, subclass 741.12.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions II and I are related as process of making and product made. The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case, the product does not require construction in an excavated site.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

During a telephone conversation with Juan J. Lazarraga on December 20, 2005 a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-17. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this

Office action. Claims 18-25 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 7, and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by JP405125848A to Maeda et al.

Claim 1:

Maeda et al. discloses a concealed storage system comprising an encased chamber (12) below a floor of a structure having an opening in said floor above the chamber, a support frame (26) fixed in the chamber, a liftable frame (24) within the support frame, said liftable frame further comprising a top deck (16) and a bottom deck (18), and a mechanism (32) for vertically raising and lowering the liftable frame through the opening in the floor.

Claim 7:

The top deck of the Maeda et al.'s liftable frame is of size and shape to cover the opening in the floor when the liftable frame is vertically lowered fully in the support

frame (Figure 2) and wherein the bottom deck of the liftable frame is even with the floor when the liftable frame is vertically raised fully in the support frame (Figure 3).

Claim 12:

Maeda et al.'s bottom deck is of size and shape to receive and store rolling equipment from the floor when the bottom deck is even with the floor (Figure 5).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP405125848A to Maeda et al.

Claim 17:

While Maeda et al. does not specify a control switch within the elevator and one control switch external to the elevator, a control panel within the elevator is notoriously well known for permitting the user to control the rise and fall of an elevator. Similarly, a control switch external to the elevator is notoriously well known for permitting a user to access the elevator.

Claims 2, 8, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP405125848A to Maeda et al. in view of JP403192084A to Yamamoto et al.

Claims 2, 8, 13:

While Maeda et al. does not disclose an emergency exit hatch, such structures are well known in the elevator art in the event of a malfunction. Yamamoto et al. discloses a ceiling rescue door device for an elevator. In view of Yamamoto et al., it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide Maeda et al.'s storage assembly with an escape hatch to prevent entrapment in the event of a malfunction.

#### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 3-6, 9-11 and 14-16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

#### ***Contact Information***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Naoko Slack whose current telephone number is 571-272-6848. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (6:00 am-2:30pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Carl D. Friedman can be reached on 571-272-6842. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Naoko Slack  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3635

NS  
December 22, 2005